

Message Text

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15

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /055 W

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R 191855Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6032

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 1960

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BL

SUBJ: BISHOPS ATTACK GOB EXPULSION OF TWO PRIESTS

1. ON MARCH 14, THE GOB EXPELLED TWO PRIESTS, ERIC DE WASSEIGE AND GEORGE WAVREILLE, FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLISHING AND CIRCULATION OF A PAMPHLET DESCRIBING THE ARMY CONFRONTATION WITH CAMPESINOS IN JANUARY 1974. FR. ERIC, A LEADING FORCE BEHIND THE CHURCH'S COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE, WAS PROBABLY ALSO THE PERSON PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PAMPHLET.

2. THE EXPULSION PROMPTED PROTEST FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF LA PAZ, EX-PRESIDENT LUIS ADOLFO SILES, THE COMMISSIONS FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE OF LA PAZ AND ORURO, THE BOLIVIAN CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS, AND OTHER CLERGYMEN. MOST OF THE PROTEST CENTERED ON THE CHARGE THAT THE GOB IN THIS CASE HAD VIOLATED ITS AGREEMENT WITH THE BISHOPS OF JANUARY 22 IN WHICH THE GOB PROMISED TO CONSULT WITH THE CHURCH PRIOR TO TAKING ACTION AGAINST CLERGYMEN. IN THIS CASE THE GOB MERELY NOTIFIED THE CHURCH OF ITS DECISION TO EXPEL THE PRIESTS BUT DID NOT GIVE THE CHURCH THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE CASE.

3. COMMENT: THIS INCIDENT WILL TEND TO UNDERCUT THE INFLUENCE IN THE CHURCH OF THOSE BISHOPS WHO FAVOR ACCOMMODATION WITH THE GOB AND WHO WERE MOST ACTIVE
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IN LEADING TO THE JANUARY COMPROMISES (SEE LA PAZ 0531).

NEVERTHELESS, THE CHURCH AND STATE CONTINUE TO HAVE
COMMON INTEREST IN AVOIDING FRICTION TO THE EXTENT
POSSIBLE.
STEDMAN

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: DISPUTES, EXPULSION, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
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Draft Date: 19 MAR 1975
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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To: STATE
Type: TE
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